

# **Fitchburg State University: Script Notes from AMCOA Presentation (2/2/2024)**

**Submitted by Dr. Cate Kaluzny, Director of Assessment**

## **Academic Assessment**

### **1. Departmental Assessment Leads**

- 2. Departmental Assessment Committees**-Pulling together Annual Reports for Program, Providing Input for Program Review, Working on External Accreditation and doing things like developing program outcomes and engaging in curriculum mapping.

So, the main things going on in Academic Assessment are Annual Assessment Reports Program Review, External Accreditation and Previously Assessment Plans. I say previously because with our use of Watermark planning and self-study we have integrated Assessment Plan items as options in the Annual Assessment Report

### **3. Learning Outcomes Assessment**

#### **A. Annual Assessment Report Academic Departments**

Captures learning outcomes assessment. Programs schedule what program learning outcomes they will be assessing each year. This varies between 1 and 3 outcomes a year with most frequently it being 1 outcome.

- Peer Review of Annual Reports by members of University wide Assessment Committee. Members work in teams of 2 people to review annual reports against a rubric. They come to a consensus about the rating in the rubric. These rubrics are shared with program department chairs prior to the next cycle of annual reports. The peer reviewers do not review their own reports but as the reviewers are typically the leads who complete the reports for their program thru the process they are learning more about completing the reports. We have asked the peer reviewers if they feel this is an important process and they have voted to continue it.
- Pilot of Watermark Planning & Self Study for Annual Reports (Sunset of AP)  
Previously our campus used TK20 which was not really positively received on the whole. So, we are sunsetting TK20 and have implemented Watermark Planning & Self Study to use with Annual Reports, Program Review, External Accreditation, and Strategic Planning. Currently we are running pilots of the Annual Report function and Program Review. We are looking into the other two functions for future pilots. Watermark refers to the Annual Report Function as Plans or Annual Plans. By using the Annual Report Function we were led to make the decision to sunset our Assessment Plan process. There are some options in the Annual Report Function to complete items in our traditional Assessment Plan along with our Annual Report items.  
So, we are piloting our Annual Assessment Reports in Watermark this year. We have about 10 programs on board with this who have been trained. After training faculty have felt very positive about the tool. What we don't know yet is whether they will successfully use Watermark to complete the template and submit their annual report. We have found out some items about the Annual Report Function:

1. It is not customizable in any way. I've had many faculties for example ask if the alignment of the assessment measures is customizable. So, for example can mastered or any other of the alignment categories be changed? The answer is no.
2. Can we change any of the fields of the report to line up with our unique campus version of an annual report is? The answer is no.
3. When describing assessment measures there is a drop-down box to select the tool. If you select other there is no opportunity to put in what that other is.
- c. Integrating Graduate Programs and Certificates into Annual Assessment Reporting
  - i. Challenge: process and procedures for full certificate integration into Annual Assessment Reporting. Would like to hear what other institutions are doing.
- B. Annual Assessment Report Non-Academic Offices
  - a. Challenge: Format and Structure needs development. We would like more constancy across units on how and what is reported.

Any questions?

#### 4. **Program Review**

- A. 7-year cycle Governance Approved Template
- B. Template Currently under review. Currently working of 2018 approved template.
- C. Piloting review of non-licensure programs using Watermark. While NECHE was very positive about our Assessment including our robust annual assessment reporting and Program Review in total they saw a shortcoming being our lack of structured assessment of our non-licensure programs and extended campus programs. This pilot is part of us addressing this.
- D. Piloting of Watermark Planning & Self Study Program Review Tool This is very flexible and customizable. A draft of our pilot has been submitted via watermark and we are in process of using the feedback flow capabilities to review and provide feedback on the document.
  - a. Challenge: We want to get more of a consensus on what faculty think of this tool for program review and are going to have next years program review participants test out the tool and give feedback.
- E. External Evaluator Process  
 Program Review Leads are asked to provide the names of three vetted possibilities for external evaluators to the Dean. The Dean will make the final choice of the evaluator in consultation with myself. The evaluator then visits campus and meets with multiple constituents including Faculty in Department, Students, Dean and Provost. A report is then provided. Stipend to external evaluator is \$750.

#### 5. **External Accreditation**

- A. Guidelines for External Accreditation to assure sharing of progress with Deans, Provost, Director of Assessment. Timeline and to assure drafts are regularly shared and feedback provided.
- B. Watermark Pilot hopefully expected in 2025-26
- C. Amount of Involvement by myself varies. I've met with teams weekly during work on external accreditation to mostly leaving it in the hands of the department such as with the Nursing program.

#### 6. **UARC Committee**

- A. 1 member from each department Chaired by Associate Vice President of Institutional Research
- B. Review and Discuss Survey Results, Conduct Peer Review of Annual Reports, Provide Guidance on Assessment Reporting, Give Feedback on Gen Ed Assessment and Professional Development.

**Professional Development: Topics for Professional Development Came Out of Faculty Survey**

**Partnership with the Center for Teaching and Learning on Campus**

**2023-2024:** Watermark Training and Launch

**2022-2023: Equipping Your Assessment Toolbox:**

**Learning Outcomes Assessment**

**Presenters: Dr. Soumitra Basu and Dr. Cate Kaluzny**

**Curriculum Mapping**

**Presenters: Dr. Laura Garofoli and Dr. Cate Kaluzny**

**Planning Assessment Projects**

**Panel Members: Dr. Christine Devine, Dr. Megan Krell, Dr. Randall Grometstein, and Dr. Eric Williams**

**2021-2022: Tools for Equity in Assessment Series:**

**Equity in Assessment**

**Presenters: Junior Pena and Dr. Cate Kaluzny**

Tuesday, September 28 from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.

**Tools for Equity in Assessment: Rubrics for Teaching and Learning**

**Presenters: Dr. J.J. Sylvia and Dr. Cate Kaluzny**

**Tools for Equity in Assessment: Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

**Presenter: Dr. Kisha Tracy**

**Tools for Equity in Assessment: The Why and How of Transparent Assignment Design**

**Presenter: Dr. Laura Garofoli**

**2021-2023: Assessment Planning and Reporting Series:**

**Assessment Planning from the Experts**

**Presenters: Panel Presentation**

**Writing Your Annual Assessment Report**

**Presenter: Dr. Cate Kaluzny**

- 7. General Education Assessment-** 5 Year Process Assessing Multiple Outcomes Each Year (16 outcomes). Teams of Faculty developed tools/rubrics (we like homegrown assessment tools) Collected Artifacts and Conducted Assessment on 3 Outcomes 4<sup>th</sup> Outcome Integrated Learning sponsored by Davis Grant. Pilot exceeded expectations in regards to artifacts collected scorers

participating. Need better alignment of artifacts to rubrics created. Working on that for 2<sup>nd</sup> Assessment Day. Davis Grant to assess integrative learning. Activities to enhance understanding and assessment to assess integrative learning.

### **Non-Academic Affairs**

**8. Surveys** (Campus Climate, Exit, Alumni, Various Surveys Across Campus) Qualtrics. Not quite centralized although we track surveys across campus to ensure preventing survey fatigue.

**9. Student Affairs Assessment**

Over the last five years, the Division of Student Affairs has been building and implementing a comprehensive assessment program using the academic assessment approach as a guide in terms of language and timeframes. Each department must have at least one student learning goal and at least one effectiveness goal, as well as a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Each Department generally has between 3 and 6 goals total. Soon, this website will be updated with the 2022-23 Annual Goals, along with a quick synopsis of the results, implications, action plans, and link with the strategic plan: <https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/student-support/office-student-affairs/student-affairs-assessment>

The draft of each department's 2023-24 Annual Goals will also be found on this website. Each academic year, the departments confirm their annual goals in August, submit a mid-year report in January, and submit an end-of-year report in July. In between, the department director and assessment lead meet with the Vice President for Student Affairs several times each semester about progress, challenges, questions, and skill development. In addition, there are often group and divisional trainings about topics such as equity-minded assessment, creating learning outcomes, a focus on the "why", aligning departmental and program goals with divisional and institutional goals, methods beyond surveys, and logistical pieces of our assessment process.

In both the mid-year report and end-of-year report, departments detail KPIs, goals, objectives, activities, assessment method, link to DEI efforts, link to Strategic Plan, results, implications, and action plan/next steps. In the end-of-year report, additional reflective responses are provided about the process in general, requests for skill development, and KPI performance. These reports demonstrate a wide variety of methods used to gather evidence about the extent to which we are effective at achieving what we say we will achieve.

In 2022-23, the Student Affairs Departmental Review Process was introduced. We use the standards from the [Council for the Advancement of Standards](#) to evaluate our work. Over a series of years, each functional area in the Division of Student Affairs will conduct a program review. Note that some departments will regularly conduct several reviews because they address multiple functional areas.